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READING DIAGNOSTIC APPROACHES.

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A DIAGNOSTIC KIT DESIGNED TO HELP CLASSROOM TEACHERS DIAGNOSE READING DIFFICULTIES MORE ADEQUATELY AND MOTIVATE PUPILS MORE EFFECTIVELY IS PRESENTED. SUGGESTIONS ARE APPLICABLE TO LOWER PRIMARY CHILDREN. DIAGNOSTIC TECHNIQUES ARE OUTLINED FOR SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE OBSERVATION OF LANGUAGE ABILITY, VISUAL PERCEPTION SKILLS, AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION, AND DIRECTIONAL SKILL. SUGGESTIONS FOR FORMAL AND INFORMAL ASSESSMENT OF ORAL READING, WORD ATTACK, PERSONALITY, AND HOME BACKGROUND ARE INCLUDED. REMEDIAL TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH PERSISTENT READING DIFFICULTIES ARE PRESENTED IN DETAIL. HIGH INTEREST, LOW VOCABULARY BOOKS ARE LISTED WITH GRADE LEVELS. A BIBLIOGRAPHY IS PROVIDED. (MC)

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SUGGESTIONS FOR MEETING SOME SPECIFIC READING NEEDS OF CHILDREN THROUGH DIAGNOSTIC TEACHING

There is no one method which helps all children to read. It is important to diagnose each child's needs and to develop a program to meet these needs. The challenge to the teacher is to find the next step for each child, on the level where he can succeed. Some of these suggestions may prove helpful to teachers in determining specific needs of first-, second-, and third-grade children who are experiencing serious reading difficulties.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Suggestions for Meeting Some Specific Reading Needs of Children Through Diagnostic Teaching	iii
Basic Principles	1
Diagnostic Kit: Explanation and Contents	3
Diagnostic Kit: Assessment Instruments	5
A Practical Program: Start the Child Reading Where He Can Read	22
Suggestions for Persistent Reading Difficulties	25
Specialized Methods Utilizing Motor, Auditory and Visual Skills	28
Books for Unsuccessful Readers	32
Bibliography	35

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Modern developmental reading programs start where the child is and progress with him. Continual diagnosis of the individual child's reading provides the basis for correcting his difficulties and for supplementing his "gaps" in learning.

We know that children do not learn at the same rate, nor do they come to each new problem with the same background of experience. Thus, a child may be able to learn one skill quickly and "lag" on others. Children with I.Q.'s below 90 benefit from reading at a slower pace and using a wide variety of materials based on interests, while other children need additional experiences before they can bring meaning to reading.

No two reading problems are exactly the same. However, there are some basic principles to consider:-

. Diagnosis of Individual Needs Is Basic in Planning a Reading Program.

Many of the children who have problems in reading have not been successful in programs which meet the needs of the majority of children. An analysis of a child's specific reading difficulties should precede instruction to discover his present level and areas of success and failure. Because a child with a learning disability usually has difficulty in sustaining attention to the task for any length of time, it is equally important for diagnosis to determine his attention span and the frequency of his fatigue. [1]

. Motivation Is the Key to a Successful Learning Experience.

Motivation by the teacher is a primary requirement for profitable instruction in reading. Many children with reading problems have faced much sarcasm and ridicule and feel that they are stupid. Most of them are deeply discouraged and have accepted failure as inevitable. The teacher's great task is to build self-confidence within the child and a sincere belief that he can read. Motivation through a wide variety of highly interesting materials is equally important for these children, who have become disinterested through failure. [2] Children who find reading difficult should be given material which they can read successfully without pressure to "get up to grade level."

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[1] Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability (New York: Longmans, Green, 1956), Third Edition, pp. 276-314.

[2] Ibid.

. It Is Important to Start From What the Child Knows.

Instruction must be based upon diagnosis. The child should begin on the reading level where he can succeed, where he knows almost all of the words on a page. An attempt to read material that is too difficult forces a child to experience failure. [3]

Morton Botel, in his book on How to Teach Reading,[4] states that between 10 and 15 million students in our schools are reading books that are too difficult for them. This estimate has widespread agreement among reading specialists who find that one-fourth to more than one-third of the students in regular classrooms are attempting to read books which are so difficult they interfere with reading progress.

. The Children's Present Interests May Open the Door to Reading.

An inventory of reading interests, general interests, likes, dislikes, etc., will give the teacher many clues which will help in understanding the child and in preparing suitable materials for him.

. Success Must be Emphasized Daily.

The child needs to see dramatic visual evidence that he is improving. Individual progress charts may record a variety of accomplishments: the number of pages read, stories or books read, new words learned, decrease of errors in oral reading, etc. If comprehension is weak, an accuracy chart may be used to show improvement. If the child lacks a basic sight vocabulary, it is profitable to keep a card file of words learned.

These individual progress charts may be simply made. There are many possible forms, such as a bar graph, a line graph, a thermometer, etc. The units on charts to show improvement should be small enough that progress can be recorded at frequent intervals. It is desirable for a child to compete with his own record rather than with those of other children.

. Continuous Evaluations Must Be Made.

Diagnosis is continuous. As a child gains strength in some areas, needs are revealed in other areas. Through keeping a daily log of a child's errors, the teacher can plan for further growth. The tape recorder provides another method for detecting errors and noting growth in oral reading.

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Morton Botel, How to Teach Reading (Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1963), Revised Edition, p. 16.

DIAGNOSTIC KIT: EXPLANATION AND CONTENTS

The purpose of diagnosis is to discover the specific "gaps" in the child's reading background and to locate the level at which he can read.

The eyes and ears of the teacher provide the best assessment of a child's reading needs. Therefore, the following diagnostic techniques are merely guides to assist the teacher in making both subjective and objective observations.

It is necessary to assess the skills which are important to reading readiness as well as reading skills; for example,

- Language Ability
- Visual-Motor-Perceptual Skills and Visual Memory
- Auditory Discrimination Ability and Auditory Memory

An assessment of a child's reading ability is developed upon a continuing scale of pre-reading skills and reading skills. Research indicates a high correlation between poor reading and severe language problems. Also, a child who has a lag in his perceptual development may have such difficulty in recognizing objects and their relationship to each other in space that it causes him to perceive the world in a distorted fashion. Such a child is likely to be clumsy and poorly coordinated in his performance. The confusion with which he perceives visual symbols may make academic learning difficult no matter how intelligent he is.

Two Los Angeles City Schools Curriculum publications provide helpful assessment instruments for diagnosis:

- Speech in the Elementary School, Publication 479, provides an articulation and vocabulary test on pages 22-27, an assessment of the child's ability to hear rhyming words on pages 28-29, and a picture-story test to assess vocabulary, comprehension, and articulation on page 30.
- Suggestions for the Special Reading Program (Prepared for use by teachers under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I) provides these informal tests for diagnosis:
  - Inventory of Ability to Reproduce Initial and Final Sounds
  - Informal Word Recognition Inventory
  - Test of Letter Identification
  - Suggested Sequential Development of Phonic Analysis.

Other suggestions for diagnosing individual strengths and weaknesses in skills important to reading follow in the next section of this bulletin.

		Page
1.	Evaluating Language Ability	6 - 7
2.	Assessing Visual Perceptual Skills	7 - 8
3.	Ability to Determine Right and Left	8 - 9
4.	Auditory Discrimination	9
5.	Informal Oral Reading Test	10 - 11
5A.	Informal Reading Inventory	12
6.	Personal Inventory (to learn about child's feelings and interests)	13
7.	Sight Word Mastery	14 - 15
8.	Teacher-made Informal Tests of Reading Skills . .	16
8A.	Reversals -- for group use	17
8B.	Consonants-- for group use	18
8C.	Vowels -- for group use	19
8D.	Individual Reading Skill Check	20 - 21
9.	Teacher Observation	22

When a reading teacher suspects a child might have a gross motor disability, a visual perceptual disability or a severe language disability the child should be referred to the counselor for further testing.

DIAGNOSTIC KIT: ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

I. EVALUATING LANGUAGE ABILITY

- A scale which may give some clues to a child's language ability in interpreting pictures is presented by Marion Monroe in her study of Necessary Pre-school Experiences for Comprehending Reading:

  - Select pictures in which two or more characters are involved in an interesting activity.

  - Ask the child "What is this picture about?"

  - Record the child's verbal response and determine the level of the step on which he responds:

    Step 1. The child shrugs and doesn't respond verbally to the question. He may name objects in the picture, i.e., "dog," "boy," etc.

    Step 2. The child describes action, i.e., "The dog is jumping up," "The baby is eating."

    Step 3. The child verbalizes a relationship between characters or objects, i.e., "The boy's playing ball with the dog."

    Step 4. The child gives relationships of time, place, cause, and effect, i.e., "The boys are building a bird house. They will put it in a tree so a bird can build a nest in it."

    Step 5. The child perceives and responds to feelings and emotional reactions of the characters and draws a conclusion, i.e., "It's a dark night and the children are scared. They're singing songs around the fire. Wild animals won't come near the fire."

Children who have not reached Step 3 or Step 4 on this scale probably lack sufficient language ability to interpret a picture in a primer and respond to the text. They need many experiences which will develop verbal skills.

- A rough assessment of language ability may be secured from these items:

  - Ask the child to say "yes" if the statement is true, "no" if not true.

    - Roses walk.
    - Dogs bark.
    - Houses run.
    - Cows give milk.
    - Houses are to live in.
    - Chairs are to eat.

- Understanding verbal directions:

  - "Touch the table and your shoe."
  - "Touch your knee with your right hand."

- Auditory association of ideas:

  - Classify objects verbally:
    "Name all the animals you can."

  - Concepts of same and different:
    "How are a pig and a cow alike?"

- Visual association of ideas:

  - Classify pictures into categories such as farm animals, machinery, plants.

  - Child is shown two pictures and asked how they are alike and how different, i.e., car and truck; table and chair, etc.

- Problem solving

  - "If you couldn't find your sweater, how would you go about finding it?"

- Ask the child to repeat several simple sentences.

  - Does he omit or add words?

  - Does he change the order of the words in the sentence?

2. ASSESSING VISUAL PERCEPTUAL SKILLS

A. Hand - Eye Coordination

. Ask the child to draw geometric forms -

- Show a circle - "Draw one that looks like this."
- Show a square - "Draw one that looks like this."
- Show a triangle - "Draw one that looks like this."

Note whether the child has increasing difficulty in drawing forms as the complexity increases (immature hand-eye coordination), or, whether he reverses or turns his reproduction of forms (possible visual-perception difficulty). Does the hand fail or does the eye see inaccurately?

. Ask the child to string six large primary beads.
Provide a string with a long tip and a knot in one end.

. Ask the child to use scissors and cut a square out of paper 9 x 9".
Demonstrate first.

. Ask the child to draw a straight line between two dots.

. Show these letters: V P D E M L
Ask the child to copy each letter on the chalkboard:
"Draw one that looks like this."

B. Spatial Relationships - The ability to differentiate letters that have the same form but differ in position, b and d, depends on the perception of spatial relationships.

. Use 2 pegboards (or celotex acoustical square tiles with about 12 holes across and 12 holes down and golf tees)

- The teacher makes a simple design on one square board and asks the child to duplicate the design on his board.

- Note any tendency to reverse or turn the pattern.

. Use 3 small toy cars: red, blue, green.
Give specific directions:

"Put the red car beside the blue car."
"Put the green car behind the red car."
"Lift the green car over the red car and put it in front of the red car."
"Move the blue car forward."
"Move the red car backward."

C. Figure - Ground Perception - The ability to distinguish figure from ground is necessary for the analysis and synthesis of words, phrases and paragraphs.

Can the child fix his attention on one stimulus?

Is he disturbed by background material?

. Ask the child to find all the same color in a box of assorted beads.

. Superimpose the outline of a house upon the outline of a tree.
Ask the child to outline the tree with a crayon.

. Superimpose the outline of a triangle upon the outline of a square.
Ask the child to outline the triangle with a crayon.

3. ABILITY TO DETERMINE RIGHT AND LEFT

The following exercises should give a clue as to which children are having difficulty in distinguishing right from left.

. Ask the child to follow these directions:
"Show me your right hand."
"Show me your right foot."
"Show me your left hand."
"Raise your left hand."
"Stamp your left foot."
"Shake your right hand."

- Face the child and say:
  "Show me my right hand."
  "Show me my left hand."
  "Touch your right knee with your right hand."
  "Touch your right knee with your left hand."

The following exercise should help the teacher discover which children have not developed the habit of left to right progression:

- Make up a large card with several rows of pictures (newspaper "funnies" or rows of small pictures).

  Ask the child to name the pictures, noting the order he uses.

- Place ten blocks in a row. Ask the child to count them, noting whether he goes from left to right or from right to left.

4. AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION

"Poor auditory discrimination is prevalent among poor readers. Unless a child can hear the difference between two spoken words he cannot learn to associate each of them consistently with the printed symbol. This skill can be improved by listening."

Effective Reading
Albert J. Harris

Children who have difficulty hearing similarities and differences in words are likely to have difficulty using phonetic skills in reading. They may profit from a strengthened visual approach to learning while auditory perception skills are developing.

Can the Child Hear Likenesses and Differences?

- Pairs of words may be read to the children by the teacher.
  Ask: "Are these the same or different?" (adapted from Wepman's Auditory Discrimination Test)

pick-tick	boy-girl
cape-cake	bad-dad
rug-rug	pin-pen
bug-bud	pig-peg
ball-ball	barn-bar
bun-pun	bam-ban
pot-cot	map-nap
cut-cup	sick-thick
come-come	hop-hot
run-ran	turn-burn
him-hum	bat-bat
sock-suck	hub-hug
bad-bed	sell-shell
pit-pick	lot-lock
thin-shin	bet-bit
gun-bun	bet-pet
bad-bad	hop-hop

5. INFORMAL ORAL READING TEST

Informal oral reading tests for diagnosis, beginning with easy material selected to assure initial success, should be given to determine the child's instructional and free reading levels. Graduated levels of books in a series may be used to discover the child's specific reading disabilities and his reading achievement level. As the child reads orally, the teacher notes his errors and reading habits and records these on the Informal Reading Inventory (Word Recognition Record).

Informal oral reading tests may be easily developed from textbooks by the teacher:*

- Use two copies of each reader in a well-graded basal series from pre-primer up.
- Choose a story in the early part of the book. Mark one copy for teacher use and indicate 50, 100, and 200 words. Put a vertical line beside each and write the number of words in the margin.
- Prepare specific questions to ask as a comprehension check on each story.

This is an individual oral reading test. The child reads only to the teacher to try to find a book that is "just right" for him and to discover where he needs help.

- Start with a book which is below the child's expected reading ability:
  - Record errors on the Informal Inventory Sheet.
  - Note fluency, voice control, nervous mannerisms, etc.
- Try the books in order of increasing difficulty until the material is too difficult for the child.
  - At pre-primer level 50 words are usually enough. Stop after 25 words if he cannot read these fairly successfully.
  - From primer up, 100-word selections are often long enough. If the teacher has any doubts another 100 words may help determine the child's reading level and difficulties.

*Harris, Albert J. Effective Teaching of Reading New York: David McKay Co., Inc. 1962.

. Reassure the child that even adults find it difficult to read orally without silent reading preparation, but just this time it will help in discovering where he is having difficulty. Encourage him to "try."

- In primary grades proper names should be told. Also, it is reassuring to look at an illustration before beginning to read the story.

- Ask the child to read orally at sight from one copy while the teacher follows in the other copy.

- If the child hesitates over a word for five seconds tell him the word, noting on the Informal Inventory his attempts to pronounce words, as well as the words he miscalls or does not know. Note voice, posture, word-by-word reading, etc.

- When he finishes reading a selection ask him what the story was about as well as specific questions to check on comprehension.

The teacher records the total number of different words not read correctly and divides this by the total number of words read. The result gives the percent of error in word recognition.

. Repeated errors on the same word are not counted.

. Errors that the child corrects by himself are not counted.

. Minor faults such as adding a final s or substituting a for the should be counted only once even if repeated several times.

The percent of error in word recognition gives a clue to the probable level where the child can read independently successfully and where he can read with the teacher's help successfully:-

. Independent reading level is the highest level at which the child's reading is fluent, word recognition errors are not more than two percent, and comprehension is very good.

. Instructional reading level is the highest level at which the child can read successfully if aided with preparation, guided reading, discussion and re-reading. The percent of error in word recognition is usually between two and five. Comprehension is correct in general but details are probably forgotten. Reading is fairly fluent but repetitions and pauses may occur.

5A. INFORMAL READING INVENTORY (Word Recognition Record)

(Name of Pupil) (Age) (Grade) (School)

Date	Book & reading level	Page	Substitutions		These words were not recognized	Words Inserted	Words Omitted
			Child said this word	For this word			

6. PERSONAL INVENTORY

Child's Name _____ School _____

DATE	INDEX	DATE	READING TESTS			ADDITIONAL TEST DATA
			Oral	Voc.	Comp.	

Family:

Hobbies:

Interests:

What I'd like to read about:

When I grow, I want to be:

Three wishes: 1.
2.
3.

What I like about school:

What I don't like about school:

A job I'd like to have at school:

What makes me feel mad at school:

What makes me feel mad at home:

Who makes me most mad at home:

What I would like to change if I could change anything in the world:

What I like about myself:

What I don't like about myself:

My friends are:

I worry about:

7. SIGHT WORD MASTERY

Instant Words

(Partial list compiled by
Edward Fry,
Loyola University Reading Clinic)

The series of words on the next page contain the most frequently used words in reading and writing the English language. This is an edited list of words prepared from the most frequently appearing words in scientific word counts done by Dolch, Fitzpatrick, Horne, Lorge, Thorndike and others.

Generally speaking the first group of 25 words contains words of greater frequency than words of the second group. Words in the first hundred have a greater frequency than words in the second hundred, etc. (Only the first hundred words are reproduced in this bulletin.)

These words should be recognized instantly for reading ease. Frequent and varied repetition through experience charts, riddles, labels, stories, games and flash cards encourage children to gain automatic command of these words.

Many times children are helped to remember these words when they "personalize" them by using the words in sentences involving themselves. For example, Mary may remember like when she writes (or dictates) I like candy or Mary likes candy. She will probably remember it even better if she can find a picture of candy to cut out and glue beside her sentence.

INSTANT WORDS

First Hundred

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4
the	he	go	who
a	I	see	an
is	they	then	their
you	one	us	she
to	good	no	new
and	me	him	said
we	about	by	did
that	had	was	boy
in	if	come	three
not	some	get	down
for	up	or	work
at	her	two	put
with	do	man	were
it	when	little	before
on	so	has	just
can	my	them	long
will	very	how	here
are	all	like	other
of	would	our	old
this	any	what	take
your	been	know	cat
as	out	make	again
but	there	which	give
be	from	much	after
have	day	his	many

8. TEACHER-MADE INFORMAL TESTS OF READING SKILLS

The three tests which follow (for reversals, consonants and vowels) are suggestions only, for group use.

The Individual Reading Skills Check provides a capsule-size diagnosis of some of the reading skills possessed by an individual child and indicates areas requiring further evaluation. This may be helpful to "spot-check" a new child entering the program.

Teachers should develop their own informal materials to ascertain which reading skills children possess and which skills children need.

A suggested sequence of reading skills is presented in the bulletin Suggestions for the Special Reading Program.

8A. TEST FOR REVERSALS

A. Letter Reversals (child circles the letter that is not the same)

1. E / E E E ∃ E
2. b / b q b b b
3. p / p p d p p
4. M / M M M W M
5. n / n u n n n

B. Word Reversals and Substitutions (the teacher reads the complete sentence. The child writes the missing word)

1. who / how _____ did you do that?
2. was / saw My mother _____ going to the store.
3. horse / house The _____ went into the barn.
4. on / no Please turn the lights _____.
5. spot / tops There is a _____ on your dress.
6. left / felt Which is your _____ hand?
7. from / form I just came _____ lunch.
8. there / three He has _____ dogs at his house.
9. board / broad My dad cut the _____ into two pieces.
10. rid / bid I got _____ of the salesman.
11. bump / pump The oil well will _____ oil.
12. pack / back Please _____ your suitcase.
13. ripe / ride I ate a _____ apple.

8B. CONSONANT TEST FOR B, P, AND D
(Similar tests may be constructed for other consonants)

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: As the teacher reads the words, the children fill in the beginning consonant.

_____ell	_____ump	_____est
_____ark	_____ound	_____eep
_____ill	_____ack	_____ent

****

shee_____	fee_____	see_____
dum_____	cree____	har_____
ri_____	bum_____	hel_____

****

ro___e ri___e wi___e ro___e pa___er

****

The teacher reads one of the words in each pair. The children circle the word read.

park	rib	deed	pack	brown	bump
dark	rid	deep	back	drown	pump
rope	ride	bit	but	pill	bound
rode	ripe	pit	cut	bill	pound

****

The teacher dictates 6 words. The children write the beginning letter.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

8c. GROUP TEST FOR VOWELS

Name_____ Date _____

Directions: The teacher reads the words:

e.g.,	sit	doll	cap
	sat	dill	cup
	set	dull	cop, etc.

The children fill in the missing vowel.

SHORT "A" "O" "I" "U" "E"

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
s__t	d__ll	c__p	sp__ll	sl__d
s__t	d__ll	c__p	sp__ll	sl__d
s__t	d__ll	c__p		

6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
r__m	h__t	p__n	f__n	b__d
r__m	h__t	p__n	f__n	b__d
	h__t	p__n	f__n	b__d

11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
b__t	b__g	h__d	r__g	h__m
b__t	b__g	h__d	r__g	h__m
b__t	b__g			h__m

16.	17.	18.	19.	20.
m__sh	fl__tter	l__ck	p__ddle	r__mp
m__sh	fl__tter	l__ck	p__ddle	r__mp

8D. INDIVIDUAL READING SKILL CHECK

(This check list gives ideas for gaining quick clues into reading skills needed by children. The teacher may wish to make this more simple or more complex. The items should be reproduced on a separate sheet for each child to provide an individual record.)

A. Alphabet

"What are the names of these letters?"

d p t a w r n j v b A W R T N P J E B H

B. Sight Vocabulary

"Can you read these words?"

mother	with	please	while
little	he	when	noise
I	some	many	through
said	did	would	cook
and	like	work	know
come	my	off	anything
you	away	took	beauty
will	for	old	across

C. Suffixes

"Can you read these words?"
(Teacher may read the first word and the child may continue reading the word and endings.)

call	walk	jump	cry
calls	walking	jumped	crying
called	walks	jumps	cried

D. Compound Words

"Can you read these words?"

playground	sometimes	bedtime
maybe	wallpaper	football

E. Beginning Consonants

"I am going to say some words. Point to the letters they begin with: man, ball, sun, etc...."

m b s p r f l c n d

F. Consonant Blends

"I am going to say some words. Point to the letters they begin with: shoe, black, spoon, etc...."

sh bl sp cr cl dr sl gr

G. Using Context Clues

"Can you tell me a word that makes sense and begins with the first letter of the blank?"

1. Dick likes to play b_____.

2. Mary likes to drink m_____.

3. Dick hit his finger with the h_____.

4. Birds lay eggs in n_____.

H. Consonant Substitution

"I will read the first word. Can you read the next one?"

win	ball	ran	get	boat	cake	dump
fin	tall	can	pet	goat	rake	jump

I. Vowels

"Can you read these words?"

not can in hole came pin bus

9. TEACHER OBSERVATION OF READING AND VISION HABITS

Name _____ Grade _____

Teacher _____ School _____ Date _____

Directions: Circle the words or phrases that describe the behavioral pattern of the child.

READING ATTITUDE:
withdraws from reading - emotionally disturbed - possible auditory handicap - possible visual handicap - physically fit - repeated the grade - speech handicap.

READING ATTACK:
pays attention - lacks interest - has poor study habits - has a plan for working - lacks perseverance - fails to associate what he reads with his own experience.

PHYSICAL READING HABITS:
points when he reads - moves his head - moves his lips - holds book at wrong angle - holds book at proper distance.

RATE AND COMPREHENSION:
word by word reader - understands what he reads - remembers what he reads - shows expressions of pleasure on his face while reading.

MECHANICAL ASPECTS OF READING:
makes substitutions - omits letters or words - mispronounces words - reverses letters or words - repeats words or phrases - satisfactory eye movement.

WORD RECOGNITION HABITS:
uses context clues - uses picture clues - uses configuration clues - uses structural analysis - applies phonetic principles - senses syllables - guesses at words.

****

SYMPTOMS OF VISION PROBLEMS:

Losing place while reading.
Avoiding close work.
Poor sitting posture and position while reading.
Holding reader or reading material closer than normal.
Frowning, excessive blinking, scowling, squinting, or other facial distortions while reading.
Moving head excessively while reading.
Holding body rigid while looking at distant objects.
Tilting head to one side.
Tending to rub eyes.
Thrusting head forward
Displaying tension during close work.

A PRACTICAL PROGRAM: START THE CHILD READING WHERE HE CAN READ

Step One: Use diagnostic materials to discover the level where the child can read successfully and the areas of his specific reading disabilities. Establish the child's independent reading level (where he can read with no difficulty), and his instructional reading level (where he can read 19 words out of 20).

Step Two: Use low-vocabulary--high-interest reading materials for the child's initial reading experience. Try to match books and materials to his interests and encourage and praise his efforts freely. Some children have failed so completely in books that it is necessary to substitute other experiences at first. Science experiences and experiments, filmstrips, the tape recorder, and other audio-visual aids are good motivation.

Some children enjoy writing their own stories and re-reading them.

Emphasize reading for meaning in every experience.

Be sure the child can read almost every word, not missing more than one or two words out of 100. This is his independent reading level.

Step Three: Build a sight vocabulary continually. Use many avenues to build meaning with the words.

Step Four: Keep a notebook in which to record each child's oral reading performance daily, noting the words he does not know and the words he miscalls.

This, in addition to the original diagnosis, reveals which phonetic and structural clues to word recognition the child has not mastered.

These need to be taught gradually and constantly reinforced.

Step Five: After the pupil has met success in reading on his independent level he should have daily instruction in a developmental series of books. He should begin on his instructional level.

There are several interesting supplementary developmental series in most schools which provide new material for children who are having reading difficulties. These books are planned for a sequential development of reading skills and provide many tested ideas for presenting and reinforcing word attack skills and comprehension skills.

Betts emphasizes the need for a child to receive reading instruction at the level where he knows 95% of the words. He warns that interest may be reduced by using books that are too difficult, by over-analyzing the story, by over-stressing word analysis, or by re-reading and testing. He feels that over-analyzing the story for motives and plot slows up reading and dulls interest because the emphasis transfers from reading to study. He lists these basic steps to be considered in using a basal book:

- Begin with the level which the children can read with ease and dignity.

- Develop phonic and related word perception skills as the children meet these needs in an interesting situation.

- Use succeeding books in sequence, thus raising success levels gradually.

Step Six: Continue to have the child read many books on his independent level at home and with a partner at school.

Step Seven: Each child should keep an individual record of his progress on a graph or chart. He needs visual evidence that he is succeeding (words learned, books read, word-attack skills mastered, comprehension questions answered, etc.).

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One Method of Encouraging Reading at Home and Recording Progress

Discarded readers may be torn apart and made into individual reading booklets, containing one story or unit in each booklet. Old Weekly Readers may also be used.

- The pages may be stapled into colored construction covers. Each grade level (pre-primer, primer, first, second, etc.) is designated by a different color.

- Each child makes and fills in an individual record chart, using the appropriate color crayons. He agrees to read at least ten books in one color before going into the next color.

- These booklets may be taken home and read to the parents. Some teachers send home a record booklet in which the parent may sign his name and the date the child read to him.

- Children learn to read by reading and need much practice. They are motivated to read by watching their successes grow on their own reading chart record.

- This collection of reading booklets should include levels easy enough that each child may find material which he can read successfully.[6]

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[6]Selma E. Herr, Learning Activities for Reading (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company), p. 25.

One Suggestion for Recording Individual Pupil Progress in Reading

MY INDIVIDUAL READING RECORD

I promise to read 10 books of one color before I go down to the next color.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Extras		
Yellow													
Orange													
Red													
Purple													
Blue													
Green													
Brown													

Spaces are to be "colored in" after booklet is read at home. Booklets are graduated in difficulty: the top color indicates booklets on the easiest reading level. Each grade level is indicated by a different cover color on the booklet.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSISTENT READING DIFFICULTIES

There is no one way of correcting any learning problem. The chart which follows--BRIEF INVENTORY OF READING DIFFICULTIES--lists typical reading difficulties and gives a few "capsule-size" suggestions from reading authorities. This should encourage further reading!

The suggestions which follow this chart are explained more fully, and it is hoped that they may help children experiencing reading difficulty.

Difficulties	Correction	Source
Low Sight Vocabulary	Kinesthetic method	Fernald
	Copy words with typewriter	Harris
	Use word games	Durrell
	Additional firsthand experience	Gates
	Experience chart stories	Russell
Guesses at Unknown Words	Read easier material	Harris
	Have child find word in context	Russell
	Learn consonant sounds	Betts
	Divide words into syllables	Gray
Ignores Errors and Reads on	Record, so child hears what he reads	Durrell
	Easier material	Betts
	Use of context clues	Gray
Word by Word Reading	Use easier material...much practice	Botel
	Phrase reading exercises	Durrell
	Silent reading before oral	Betts
	Hand tachistoscope (using phrases)	Harris
	Choral reading	Russell
Ignores Punctuation	Dramatization	Harris
	Audience reading	Durrell
	Read by thought units	Brueckner
Incorrect Phrasing	Choral verse	Durrell
	Practice in phrase perception	Harris
	Emphasize meaning	Heilman

Difficulties	Correction	Source
Habitual Repetition of Words	Use easier material Use recorder Cover lines...read with card	Betts Harris Durrell
Omits Words	Easy, interesting material Read to follow directions Read for specific points, as arithmetic word problems	Durrell Harris Brueckner
Mispronunciation	Read for pleasure Observe initial parts and endings Give help in enunciation and pronunciation individually	Harris Gray Bond and Tinker
Low Rate of Reading	Use easy material Silent reading first Use vocabulary notebook Use card above lines as word accelerator	Durrell Betts Smith Harris
High Rate at Expense of Accuracy	Give exercises which show his inaccuracies Use easier material as he is probably skipping	Bond and Tinker Harris
Does Not Use Context	Provide firsthand experiences Increase spoken vocabulary and use of materials of high interest level, such as experience records, labels, bulletin boards, key sentences, etc. Show importance of context Teaching guessing at words in a sentence with just beginning letter, as, "The boys play f_____."	Harris Betts Fernald Harris
Does Not Use Expectancy of Words and Concepts	Use visual aids, discussion Study root words and suffixes Use words in different ways... learn various meanings	Betts Gray Durrell

Difficulties	Correction	Source
Poor Visual Discrimination	Use of interest, meaning, and observation of needs	Betts
	Use context	Harris
	Child may need a systematic kinesthetic procedure	Fernald
Does Not Use Word Configuration	Point out the similarities and differences of words in sentences	Gray
Unable to Use Syllabication Skills	Teach principles of syllabication	Gray
	Listen for accents; division of words; teach prefixes and suffixes; use syllabication games such as anagrams	Harris
Full and Part Reversals	Emphasize left-to-right eye movement	Durrell
	Use kinesthetic method	Fernald
	Emphasize beginning letter sounds	Gray
	Use in context and make first letter red and last word green	Harris
	Compare words which are reversed	Betts
Initial Consonants and Blends Not Known	Use words for key sounds	Heilman
	Listen for beginning sounds	Gray
	Classify pictures and words that begin alike	Betts
Errors on Vowels	Exercises to analyze vowel sounds	Kottmeyer

SPECIALIZED METHODS UTILIZING MOTOR, AUDITORY AND VISUAL SKILLS

There are several methods utilizing motor, visual and/or auditory techniques which aid some children in learning to read.

Kinesthetic Method[6]

The kinesthetic method is often effective for extreme disability when other methods have failed. One adaptation of Dr. Fernald's method follows:-

Tracing

1. Teacher writes word requested by child on board or on large piece of paper approximately 3 x 10 inches.
2. Child pronounces word and traces it with his finger. Finger contact is important in tracing.
3. Word is erased or covered.
4. Child tries to write word on board or on paper without copy before him, saying syllables as he writes.
5. These steps are repeated until word is written correctly. The teacher should not call attention to errors. The child may trace the word as many times as he needs to.
6. Child keeps words he has learned in a word box.

Points to be Remembered by the Teacher

1. The child says the word in syllables as he writes but words are never broken up into syllables in the writing. The words are written in natural form and then underlined, under sound units.
2. The child writes without looking at the copy before him.
3. Errors are never pointed out to children. Wrong forms are erased or covered without comment upon them.
4. Words written incorrectly are written correctly several times by the child before leaving them. Each writing is covered or erased before the word is re-written.
5. Children are not expected to retain the spelling of words from day to day.

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[6]Fernald, Grace M. Remedial Techniques in Basic School Subjects (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1943)

Harris, in How to Increase Reading Ability, lists these as strong points of the kinesthetic method:

- It enforces careful and systematic observation and study of words.
- It makes necessary a consistent left-to-right direction in reading.
- It provides adequate repetition.
- Errors are immediately noted and corrected.
- Progress can be noted by the child at practically every lesson.
- The sensory impressions from tracing, writing, and saying the words reinforce the visual impressions and seem to be of definite value to children whose visual memory is very poor.
- Children learn to be independent in the kinesthetic method.

Hints:

Some teachers find it helpful to write the words on paper towels because the texture reinforces the kinesthetic with tactile stimulation.

Other teachers use nylon net over the words to provide tactile reinforcement.

Visual-Motor Method

A visual-motor method is presented by Durrell. It is not as time-consuming as the kinesthetic method. This method is sometimes effective for the child who fails in word discrimination, or who tends to reverse letters or omit sounds. Printing is preferred since it is similar to the letters used in print. These steps are used:

1. Teacher places the word on large flash card and says the word; then she asks the child to say the word and look carefully at it.
2. Teacher turns word down and asks the child to write it from memory.
3. After the child writes the word, he compares it with the copy. "Is your word just like this?"
4. Teacher asks the child to look at the flash card again and say the word; then to write it as soon as the copy is turned down.
5. The same procedure is repeated.
6. After two or three words have been taught, the child may dictate them into a short sentence which the teacher types.[7]

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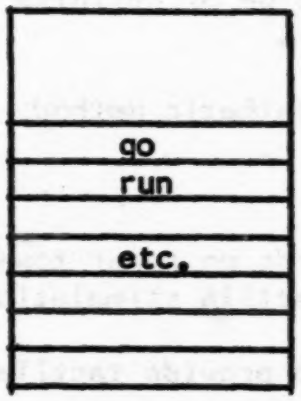
[7] Donald D. Durrell, Improving Reading Instruction (Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book, 1956), p. 203.

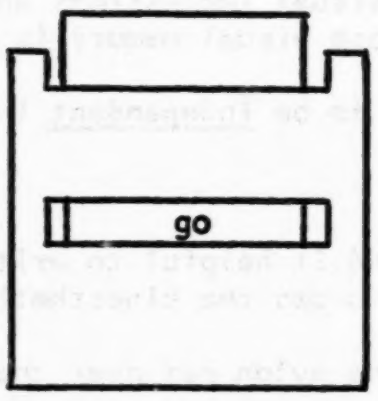
Tachistoscopic Method

The tachistoscopic method is visual and utilizes flash cards or a teacher-made hand tachistoscope. It enables word-by-word readers to gain practice in quick word and phrase perception. If a word is to be read smoothly in phrases, it must be recognized accurately in one-tenth of a second or less. Durrell and Harris suggest the use of a teacher-made tachistoscope for each child which exposes only one word, phrase, or short sentence in the opening. The phrase or short sentence may be dictated by the child and printed by the teacher. The purpose must be explained to the child so that he realizes the value of a "quick look."[8]

The following is an example of one type of hand tachistoscope:



Cards with words child <u>needs</u> to learn



Hand tachistoscope (a container for the card on the left)

- The child takes a quick look at the word in the window.
- He may accumulate several cards with words he needs to learn. These may be kept in the tachistoscope envelope for practice and review.

The hand tachistoscope may be made from a large envelope, pasting down the flap, cutting one end open, and cutting a window near that end. It may also be made from a folder taped around sides and one end.

Large envelopes may be used as hand tachistoscope to provide a "quick look" for phrases and sentences.

Language Experience Approach

(A special method to help the child acquire a Basic Sight Vocabulary)

In the "Language Experience" approach to reading, the pupil dictates his ideas to the teacher. The dictation is typewritten and the following day the pupil attempts to "read back" his typed story.*

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[8] <u>Ibid.</u>

*Van Allen, R. V., & Allen, C., <u>Language Experience in Reading</u> Encyclopedia Britannica, 1966.

Recognition of the words is facilitated because the vocabulary is the child's speaking vocabulary. The words not recognized may be learned by special methods of word-learning, such as the Kinesthetic-tactile approach.

The "experience method" strengthens these basic reading skills:

- Sight vocabulary is developed and reinforced.
- Retention is improved by filing the recognized and learned words in a vocabulary "word box" and by re-reading them in the original story, in other teacher-prepared materials, and in isolation.
- Filing words builds meaningful dictionary habits.
- The child sees sounds combined with the letters used to represent them.

A large percentage of the words learned through this approach will be common to basic sight word lists. This success usually gives the child confidence to try easy reading materials or basal readers.

This method may be used with individual children or in a small group of pupils who need similar help. Often children enjoy dictating and re-reading group experience stories as well as individual stories.[9]

Dr. Stauffer suggests that the child underline all the words he knows in his story before he re-reads it to the teacher or the group. As he re-reads it aloud the teacher may read the unknown words. The child might then choose several of the unknown words which he would like to learn and ask the teacher to write these on flash cards for his personal file of "Words I Need to Learn."

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[9]Russell C. Stauffer, "Basic Problems in Correcting Reading Difficulties," Corrective Reading in Classroom and Clinic, No. 79, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1956), pp. 118-126.

BOOKS FOR UNSUCCESSFUL READERS

"Bait the hook with
what the fish likes--
Not what you like."

Lloyd George

A child must begin to read on the level where he can succeed. Too many children are struggling to read books which are so difficult they are forced to fail.

Often the child has difficulty finding books which match both his vocabulary level and his interests. Every classroom needs many interesting easy-to-read books which have a high interest level.

Recently, many authors, including "Dr. Seuss," have successfully met the challenge to interest reluctant readers by writing highly interesting books with a very limited vocabulary. There are many easy-to-read books available now, filled with comedy, adventure, fantasy, and suspense. Evaluations from poor readers indicate that they can hardly wait to turn the pages of these books "to find out" what happens next.

Boys seem to encounter more reading difficulties than girls. For this reason it is wise to allow boys' interests to determine the content of many of these easy-to-read books. Dr. Jo Stanchfield, in studying boys' reading interests, discovered these as their best-liked characteristics of books:[10]

- unusual experiences
- excitement
- suspense
- liveliness and action
- surprise
- fantastic, fanciful, or weird elements
- funny incidents

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[10] Jo Stanchfield, Ed.D., Boys' Reading Interests, Research Report No. 86, December, 1961, L. A. City Schools, Committee on Research Studies.

SOME HIGH-INTEREST--LOW VOCABULARY BOOKS

Sets of Readers:

Benefic Press, Chicago Title	Grade Level
Dan Frontier	Pre-primer
Dan Frontier Goes Hunting	Primer
Dan Frontier, Trapper	First
Dan Frontier with the Indians	First
Dan Frontier and the Wagon Train	Second
Dan Frontier Scouts with the Army	Second
Dan Frontier Goes Exploring	Third
Dan Frontier, Sheriff	Third
Dan Frontier Goes to Congress	Fourth
Sailor Jack	Pre-primer
Sailor Jack and Eddy	Pre-primer
Sailor Jack and Homer Potts	Pre-primer
Sailor Jack and Bluebell	Primer
Sailor Jack and Bluebell's Dive	Primer
Sailor Jack and the Jet Plane	Primer
Sailor Jack and the Ball Game	First
Sailor Jack and the Target Ship	First
Teacher's Guide	

Garrard Publishing Co. (Dolch Series)	
In the Woods	First
Once There Was a Dog	First
Once There Was a Cat	First
On the Farm	First
Folk Stories	Second
Bear Stories	Second
Aesop's Stories	Fourth
Robin Hood Stories	Fourth

Harr Wagner Publishing Co., San Francisco	
Jim Forest and Ranger Don	Book 1
Jim Forest and the Bandits	Book 2
Jim Forest and the Mystery Hunter	Book 3
Jim Forest and Dead Man's Peak	Book 4
Jim Forest and the Flood	Book 5

Individual Titles:

Harper Publishers - Easy-to-Read Books Interest Level 1-4

Bonsall, Crosby	Who's a Pest?
" "	What Spot?
Hoff, Syd	Stanley
" "	Come and Have Fun
" "	Danny and the Dinosaur
" "	Oliver
" "	Sammy the Seal
" "	Little Chief
Hurd, Edith	Hurry, Hurry
" "	Last One Home is a Green Pig
Minarik, Else	Father Bear Comes Home
" "	Little Bear
" "	Little Bear's Friend
" "	Little Bear's Visit
Zion, Gene	No Roses for Harry

Random House, Inc., New York
Beginner Book Series: Books for Beginners
(Vocabulary 150-250 words) Interest Level 2-6

Cerf, Bennett	Bennett Cerf's Book of Riddles
Eastman, P. D.	Sam and the Firefly
Elkin, Benjamin	King's Wish and Other Stories
Geisel, Theodore (Dr. Seuss)	The Cat in the Hat
" "	The Cat in the Hat Comes Back
" "	Fox in Socks
Holland, Marion	Big Ball of String
" "	Big Jump and Other Stories
McClintock, Mike	A Fly Went By
" "	Stop That Ball

Beginner Book Series: Books for Beginning Beginners
Interest Level 2-4

Eastman, P. D.	Go, Dog, Go (75 words)
Geisel, Theodore	Green Eggs and Ham (50 words)
Lopshire, Robert	Put Me in the Zoo (100 words)

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LBN:gs